

## **Senior Staff Monthly Activity Report: February 2009**

### **Program/Division/Unit: Fire & Life Safety**

- The State Fire Marshal participated with the SC State Fire Chiefs' Association, SC Firefighters Association and the Columbia Fire Department in a media event kicking off the SC Fire Sprinklers Association building sprinkler notification program, entitled "Life Saver On Duty". The media event was held at the Columbia Hilton, an appropriate location as the Hilton was the first hotel in Columbia to display the insignia announcing that their property was protected by an Automatic Sprinkler System. The mission of the program is to increase public awareness of the value of fire sprinklers and encourage others to support fire sprinkler initiatives. The program has already expanded state-wide and interest through other states has begun.
- The OSFM hosted the SC LLR Board of Engineers & Surveyors Meeting and conducted a tour of the entire 208 acre SC Fire Academy site.
- OSFM staff delivered a presentation on ACT 357 and the benefits of fire sprinkler protection to the Georgetown County and Georgetown City Fire Chiefs and Administrators. The meetings were productive and served to lay a foundation for future improvement to fire and life safety.
- After numerous hearings and coordination of stakeholders during a 2-year process, the Pyrotechnic Safety Regulation 3184 was modified and approved. This regulation raises the age to buy fireworks to 16 years of age and adopts NFPA 1124 with modification. The standard is available on the OSFM web-page for instant customer access. This regulation will assist in maintaining reasonable safety regarding the fireworks industry and the citizens of SC.
- SC continues to follow the nation in a dramatic increase of fire deaths. Since January 1, 2009, 31 persons have perished in fire-related incidents within SC. Thirty of these fatalities occurred in their homes where they felt they were the safest. Multiple media releases and interviews were conducted in efforts to raise awareness of the necessity of installing and maintaining smoke alarms and sprinklers.
- The SCFA completed the first 8-week recruit school program. The previous 7-week program was expanded to meet the changes to the NFPA 1001 standard and IFSAC accreditation. Twenty-two graduated this program.
- We welcome Ted Martin who was selected as the new part-time Region 7 Coordinator effective 2/18/09. Ted replaces Keith Minick who recently accepted the position as Newberry's Fire Chief. Congratulations to both individuals as they continue to serve South Carolina. The regional office will continue to be at the Newberry Fire Department.
- Hydrogen continues to grow as a topic of interest and training necessity. The SCFA hosted and conducted a Hydrogen Fire and Safety Meeting with USC safety personnel, USC Engineering Dean, city bus drivers and maintenance personnel, National Welders, the USC hydrogen supply company personnel and the hydrogen bus manufacturer representative. The SCFA Superintendent and Fire Marshal also visited the unveiling of the first USC hydrogen storage and bus refueling site in Columbia.
- The academy was open 24 days this month, conducting 41 courses on site for 848 students. Nine courses were conducted regionally for 146 students, totaling 50 courses for 994 students.

- The SCFA continues to host numerous stakeholder events on campus this month, including the Columbia Fire Departments Awards Ceremony, State Association of Fire Chiefs' Quarterly Meeting and the Fire Service Joint Council Meeting.
- The Airport Rescue Firefighting program trained 172 firefighters this month, with a large contingency from Florida. This program is increasing in notoriety within the industry due to new equipment, props and quality of the SCFA training personnel.
- The February monthly fire safety fact sheet focuses on National Burn Awareness Week. Recognized the first full week of February of each year, this campaign offers the opportunity to bring burn injury prevention to the attention of parents, caregivers, children and educators. This year's theme, "Preventing Gasoline Burns" gives the South Carolina State Fire Marshal's Office, the National Association of State Fire Marshals and other fire professionals an opportunity to join with the Shriners Hospital to educate citizens about preventing gasoline-related burn injuries and deaths. The OSF encourages all interested people to use and forward these fire safety messages to save lives and protect property.
- As South Carolina prepares to administer Act 331 – Reduced Cigarette Ignition Propensity Standards, as approved during the last legislative session, the South Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal is evaluating methods of implementation. Research is underway to examine how other states have incorporated this program into their organization. Staff from SCLLR, SC DOR, SLED and AG offices are assisting the OSFM in this program which will ultimately save lives and protect firefighters from the harm and danger of cigarette fires.
- Assistant Fire Marshal for Emergency Response has conducted and attended several training and mandatory drills this month. His representation on the Homeland Security Senior Advisory Committee will ensure that the state's firefighter mobilization and urban search and rescue initiatives are adequately addressed.